United Nations S/2013/394

Security Council

Distr.: General
3 July 2013

Original: English

Letter dated 3 July 2013 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that, under the presidency of the United States, the Security Council will hold a debate on "The situation in the Great Lakes region: the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes", on Thursday, 25 July 2013. The Secretary of State of the United States, John F. Kerry, will chair the debate. In order to help steer the discussion on the subject, the United States has prepared the attached concept note (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rosemary A. **DiCarlo**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 3 July 2013 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Supporting the Great Lakes Framework

During its presidency of the Security Council in July 2013, the United States of America will convene a ministerial meeting chaired by the Secretary of State of the United States, John Kerry, to focus on establishing a sustainable peace in the Great Lakes region. This session, scheduled for 25 July, will build on several events that have brought renewed energy to establishing a lasting peace and tackling the underlying causes of conflict in the region, including the signing of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region; the appointment of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, Mary Robinson; the visit to the region in May of the Secretary-General and the President of the World Bank, followed by the first meeting of Framework signatories in Addis Ababa; the establishment of an 11+4 technical committee to develop benchmarks and monitor progress on Framework commitments; the convening, on 9 July, of women's groups from throughout the region to discuss the Framework process; and the summit of regional Heads of State, held in July under the leadership of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. Building on these positive developments, the session will provide a forum to sustain high-level, international engagement on the Great Lakes issue in support of the implementation of the Framework. In the run-up to the next meeting of Framework signatories on the margins of the General Assembly in September, this ministerial meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss how the international community can support the Framework initiative.

Background

Following years of conflict that have resulted in the deaths and displacement of millions of individuals and further perpetuated the horrifying use of sexual violence and grave human rights violations as a tactic of war, the Great Lakes region now has its greatest hope for a sustainable peace in over two decades through reinvigorated commitments made by regional leaders at the highest levels, complemented by the Secretary-General's interlocking political, security and development strategy. On the political side, Framework signatories have committed themselves to measures outlined in the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. On the military side, the Security Council answered the call of regional leaders to assist in a more robust military presence through the authorization of an intervention brigade under the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), tasked with helping the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to restore security in the east by combating all armed groups. On the development agenda, during the joint visit in May by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim, the announcement was made regarding a development package of $1 billion, which added the potential for a significant "peace dividend" and incentives for implementation of the Framework, as well as a vision for enhanced regional integration and trade. As the international community supports this interlocking strategy of combining the political and

security agenda with development incentives, Framework signatories and the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region have also highlighted the need to coordinate donor efforts to ensure that they complement the Framework process.

Debate

This session will further efforts to ensure that peace in the Great Lakes region remains high on the agenda for the international community and the Security Council. Building on the model of creating a joint development and political strategy, and working with MONUSCO, the Council will for the first time receive a joint briefing by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank President Jim Yong Kim. Other briefers will include Special Envoy Mary Robinson and high-level representatives from the African Union, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda.

During the session, briefers and Security Council members may wish to address in their statements:

- Progress made by signatories to meet their commitments contained in the Framework agreement
- Objectives to be accomplished ahead of the September meeting of Framework signatories on the margins of the General Assembly
- Recommendations for Framework benchmarks and modalities for verification of compliance with Framework commitments
- Key challenges to the implementation of the Framework and recommendations for addressing them, including ensuring civilian protection and human rights, and steps to deal with any actors that impede these objectives
- The role of regional integration in fostering long-term stability
- Member States' contributions to efforts to foster peace in the Great Lakes region

Product

We will seek Security Council agreement on the text of a presidential statement to underscore the importance of the parties' implementation of their Framework commitments, sustained engagement by the international community and greater coordination among donors to ensure that assistance supports national and regional efforts to address the root causes of conflict in the Great Lakes region.